
**Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Advisory Committee
Appointments**

The Background:

May 17, 2004 marks the 50th anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Oliver L. Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, et. al.* Therefore, it is appropriate that the State Board of Education establish an advisory committee to help commemorate the anniversary. The Board's *Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Advisory Committee*, consisting of state and local individuals who have devoted their lives to social justice and equity issues, will advise the Board on ways in which schools and local communities can commemorate the anniversary of the decision. The committee will be modeled after the *Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission* established by Public Law 107-41 of the 107th Congress of the United States.

During the announcement of the national commission, United States Secretary of Education Rod Paige stated: "It is fitting that we will be celebrating the anniversary of this landmark decision at a time when our nation has embarked upon the most sweeping education reforms in decades under the president's *No Child Left Behind* law. The Brown decision is a stark reminder that we must not rest until all children, no matter their ethnicity, no matter whether they live in an urban, suburban, or rural school district, no matter whether or not they have a disability, have access to a high quality education."

The charge of the Tennessee State Board of Education *Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Advisory Committee*, is to advise the Board on how schools and communities can "plan and coordinate public education activities and initiatives, including public lectures, writing contests, and public awareness campaigns." The Board staff will work closely with members of the committee and Dr. May Alice Ridley, Director of the Division of Civil Rights in the Tennessee Department of Education.

The State Board of Education approved the committee on final reading.

**Tennessee State Board of Education Brown V. Board of Education 50th
Anniversary Advisory Committee**

Dr. Douglas E. Wood
Executive Director
Tennessee State Board of Education

Dr. May Alice Ridley
Office of Civil Rights
Tennessee Department of Education

Mr. Mark Beal
Director of Schools
Houston County Schools

Dr. Valarie Copeland-Rutledge
Member, State Board of Education
5th Congressional District

Ms. Cherri Holden
Member, State Board of Education
7th Congressional District

Dr. Benjamin Hooks
The Benjamin Hooks Institute for
Social Change
Department of Political Science
University of Memphis

Ms. Lana Seivers
Commissioner
State Department of Education

Dr. Bobby L. Lovett
Professor of History
Tennessee State University

Ms. Velma Lois Jones
Former President
Tennessee Education Association

Dr. Reavis Mitchell
Chair, Department of History
Fisk University

Dr. Paula Myrick Short
Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Tennessee Board of Regents

Dr. Myron Ogelsby-Pitts
Deputy Executive Director
TN Student Assistance Cooperation

Ms. Beverly Owens
Executive Director
Parents for Public Schools

Ms. Beverly Robinson
Executive Director
National Civil Rights Museum

Mr. John L. Seigenthaler
Chairman Emeritus
The Tennessean

Rev. Victor M. Singletary
Pastor, First Baptist Church
Capitol Hill

The Honorable Dr. Maxine Smith
Member, Tennessee Board of Regents

Sister Sandra O. Smithson
Founder and General Administrator
Project Reflect

Mr. Steve Thompson
Teacher
Kingsport City Schools

Mr. Kent Weeks
Attorney and Professor
Vanderbilt University Law School

Mr. Avon R. Williams
Director
Cultural Learning Center

The Honorable Dr. Brad Windley
Member, TN Higher Education
Commission

Dr. Melvin Wright
Member, State Board of Education
8th Congressional District